An abſtract of a Letter from the worſhipful John Evelyn *Eſq; ſent to one of the* Secretaries *of the* R. Society *concerning the dammage done to his* Gardens *by the preceding* Winter.

SIR,

I ſhould be altogether inexcuſable for not having been to wait upon the Society of late, if my health had permitted, with ſome other unexpected occaſions (before I remov'd from *Lond.*) which I could not decently avoid: This was I aſſure you, a ſenſible Affliction to me, and now I am come into the Country, have beheld the havock which a rude ſeaſon has made in my poor Gardens, and receiv'd your Letter, wherein you acquaint me that the Socie y expects an Account of my ſufferings, I muſt begin with the Poet, ——— *Jubes renovare dolorem*: In a word, the paſt Winter has been ſo ſevere in my Territories, and where it could expugne the more defenſible, and ſuch as were incloſed, it has ravag'd all that lay open, and were abroad, without any mercy.

As to Timber Trees. I have not many here of any conſiderable age or ſtature, except a few *Elms*, which (having been decaying many years) one cannot well find to have receiv'd any freſh wounds diſtinguiſhable from old cracks and hollowneſſes; and indeed I am told by divers, that *Elms* have not ſuffer'd, as the great *Oaks* have done; nor do I find amongſt innumerable of that Species (*Elms*) which I have planted, and that are now about 25 and 30 years ſtanding, any of them touch'd: The ſame I obſerve of *Limes*, *Wall-nuts*, *Aſh*, *Beech*, *Horn-beams*, *Birch*, *Cheſnut* and other foreſters: But as I ſaid mine are young comparatively, and yet one would think, *that* ſhould leſs protect them, be auſe more tender: ſo as it ſeems the *rifting* ſo much complain'd of, has happn'd chiefly among the over-grown Trees, eſpecially *Oaks*: my Lord *Yarmouth* made his Lamentation to me, and ſo has the Earl of *Cheſterfield*, Lord *Ferrers*, Sr. *William Fermor* and others concern'd in the ſame Calamity, which I mention, becauſe of their diſtant habitations But if rightly I remember, one of theſe Noble Perſons lately told me, that ſince the Thaw, the Trees which were exceedingly ſplit, were come together

and clos'd again, and I eaſily believ'd it; but that they are really as ſolid as before I doubt will not a pear, when they ſhall come to be examin'd by the Axe, and converted to uſe: Nor has this accident happen'd only to ſtanding Timber, but to that which has been fell'd and ſeaſon'd, as Mr. [illegible], the Maſter Builder in his Majeſties Ship yard here, inform'd me: ſo much for our *Indigenæ*. As for *Exotics*, I fear my *Cork-trees* will hardly recover; but the Spring is yet ſo very backward (even in this warm and dry ſpot of mine) that I cannot pronounce any thing poſitively; eſpecially of ſuch, whoſe bark is very thick and rugged, ſuch as is the *Cork*, *Ilexina*, and divers of the reſinous Trees. The *Conſtantinopolitan* or *Horſe Cheſnut* is turgid with buds, and ready to explain its leaf. My *Cedars* I think are loſt: The *Ilex* and ſcarlet Oak not ſo; The *Arbutus* doubtful, and ſo are *Bays*, but ſome will eſcape, and moſt of them repullulate and ſpring afreſh if cut down near the Earth, at the latter end of the month: The *Scotch Fir*, *Spruce*, and white *Spaniſh* (which laſt uſes to ſuffer in their tender buds by the ſpring froſts) have receiv'd no dammage this Winter; I cannot ſay the ſame of the *Pine* which bears the greater Cone, but other *Norways* and *Pinaſters* are freſh: *Laurel* is only diſcolour'd, and ſome of the woody branches mortified, which being cut to the quick will ſoon put forth again, it being a ſucculent Plant. Amongſt our Shrubs, *Roſemary* is intirely loſt, and to my great ſorrow; becauſe I had not only beautiful hedges of it, but ſufficient to afford me flowers for the making a very conſiderable quantity of the Queen of *Hungaries* celebrated Water: ſo univerſal (I fear) is the deſtruction of this excellent Plant (not only over *England*, but our neighbour Countries more Southward) that we muſt raiſe our next hopes from the Seed. *Lentiſcus* or Sea Perſelan (of which I had a pretty hedge) is alſo periſh'd, and ſo another of French *Furze*; the *Cypreſs* are all of them ſcorch'd, and ſome to death, eſpecially ſuch as were kept ſhorn in Pyramids; but amongſt great numbers, there will divers eſcape, after they are well chaſtiz'd, that is, with a tough hazel or other wand to beat off their dead and duſty leaves, which growing much cloſer than other ſhrubs, hinder the air and dews from refreſhing the interior parts. This diſcipline I uſe to all my tonſile ſhrubs with good ſucceſs as oft as a winter parches them. The berry bearing *Savine* (which if well underſtood and cultivated were the only beſt *Succedaneums*

to

to *Cypreſs*) has not ſuffered in the leaſt; it perfectly reſembles the *Cypreſs* and grows very tall and thick. I think the Arbor *Thuya* is alive, and ſo is the *American Acacia*, *Acanthus*, *Paliurus*, *Pomgranad*; my *Laurſtinus* looks ſuſpiciouſly; ſome large and old *Alaturnus's* are kill'd, eſpecially ſuch as were more expos'd to the Sun, whereas thoſe that grow in the ſhade eſcape; the reaſon of which I conjecture to be from the reciprocations of being ſomewhat relax'd every day, and then made rigid and ſtiff again all night, which bending, and unbending ſo often, opening and cloſing the parts, does exceedingly mortifie them, and all other tender Plants, which growing in ſhady places undergo but one Thaw and change. Moſt of theſe yet will revive again at the root, being cut cloſe to ground: The *Phillyreas anguſti*, and *Serratifolia's* (both of them incomparably the beſt for ornamental hedges of any the perennial greens I know) have hardly been ſenſible of the leaſt impreſſion, more then tarniſhing of their leaves, no more have the Spaniſh *Jaſmines*, and *Perſian*, and I enumerate theſe particulars the more minutely, that Gentlemen who are curious, may take notice what *Plants* they may truſt to abroad, in all Events; for I ſpeak only of ſuch as are expos'd: As for the choiſer Rarities which are ſet in for hyemation, they certainly eſcape, or are impair'd, accordingly as they are treated by the more, or leſs experienc'd and induſtrious Gardner, or commodiouſneſs of the Conſervatory; but to ſay what may be added on this Subject, would require a large Chapter, not a Letter, I would in the mean time, adviſe ſuch as have ſuffer'd detriment in their green Houſes, not to deſpair, when they ſee the leaves of of their *Myrtles*, *Oranges*, *Oleanders*, *Jaſmines* and other precious Shrubs, ruſſet or altogether ſhrivell'd and falling; but to cut them to the quick, plaſter the wounds, and plunge their caſes and pots (trim'd with freſh mould, *&c.*) in a warm bed, carefully refreſh'd, ſhaded, air'd and treated as ſick patients, and as the prudent Gardner beſt knows how. But above all, that he be ſure, not to expoſe them, 'till theſe Eaſtern Winds (which I call our Engliſh *Etheſian*, and which makes our Springs ſo uncomfortable, when we think Winter and all danger haſt) be qualified; for they are deadly to all our Plants abroad, and frequently do us more prejudice than the moſt churliſh Winters; as commonly finiſhing the deſtruction of what the froſts have ſpar'd, nor are we to be flatter'd with a warm day or

two, which are apt to tempt Gardners to ſet out their Plants, before the end of *April*, or that we find the wiſe *Mulberry* put forth; which is certainly the moſt faithful monitor; nor ſhould we indeed, cut, or tranſplant any of the *Perennials* 'till of themſelves they begin to ſprout.

I need ſay nothing of of *Helly*, *Yew*, *Box*, *Juniper*, *&c.* (hardy and ſponteous to our Country) and yet to my grief again, I find an holly ſtandard of near 100 years old, drooping, and of doubtful aſpect; and a very beautiful hedge (tho indeed much younger) being clip'd about Michaelmas, is mortified near a foot beneath the top, and in ſome places to the very ground; ſo as there's nothing ſeems proof againſt ſuch a Winter; which is late cut, and expos'd. This hedge does alſo grow againſt the South, and is very ruſſet, whilſt the contrary ſide is as freſh and green as ever; and in all other places of my Plantations that are ſhaded, the unſhorn *Hollies* maintain their verdure, and are I judge impregnable againſt all aſſaults of Weather.

Among the fruit Trees, and Murals, none ſeem to have ſuffer'd ſave *Figs*; but they being cut down, will ſpring again at the root. The *Vines* have eſcaped; and of the eſculent Plants and Salads moſt, except *Artichokes*, which are univerſally loſt; and (what I prefer before any Salad whatever eaten raw, when young) my *Samfier* is all rotted to the very root: how to repair my loſs, I know not, for I could never make any of the ſeed, which came from the rock *Sampire* (tho mine were of the very kind) to grow.

The arboreſcent and other *Sedums*, *Aloes*, *&c.* (tho hous'd) periſh'd with me; but the *Yucca*, and *Opuntia* eſcap'd. Tulips many are loſt, and ſo the *Conſtantinople Narciſſus*, and ſuch *Tuberoſæ* as were not kept in the chimney corner where was continual fire: ſome *Anemonies* appear, but I believe many are rotted; but I have made no great ſearch in the flowery *Parterr*, only I find that moſt capillaries ſpring, and other humble, and repent Plants notwithſtanding all this rigorous ſeaſon.

My *Tortoiſe* (which by his conſtant burying himſelf in the Earth at approach of Winter I look upon as a kind of *Plant-Animal*) hapning to be obſtructed by a Vine-root, from mining to the depth, he was uſually wont to interr, is found ſtark dead, after having many years eſcaped the ſevereſt Winter. Of *Fiſh* I have loſt very few; and the *Nightingals* (which

(which for being a ſhort wing'd Bird, and ſo exceeding fat, at the time of the year, we commonly ſuppoſe them to change the Climate, (whereas indeed they are then hardly able to flee an hundred yards) are as brisk and trollic as ever, nor do I think they alter their ſummer ſtations, whatever become of them all Winter. I know not yet of any body, who has given tolerable ſatisfaction in this particular, amongſt our *Ornithologiſts*.

Thus Sr. I have ſent you a Rhapſody of ſuch Obſervations as I have been able to make ſince my return home, and I wiſh they may prove of any importance to the Society, to which, and to your ſelf, I am

Sir,

A moſt devoted

and Obedient Servant

Says Court Deptford
April 14, 1684.

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